"The little creature struggled up into a kneeling posture." p. 68.

OUR NEIGHBOUR, WIDOW YATES.

BY GRACE STEBBING.

CHAPTER XI.

"IT WASN'T MY HAND."

WHEN Mary Yates opened the cottage door, the kettle and its lid were beginning a vigorous clapper-business announcement that the water was in proper condition for making the tea.

"Here's mother, Effie, lass," said her father, with a smile. "Now for the feast you have been taking such housewifely care of."

"Yes, indeed," added Mary. "Now for our bit of home

comfort of father's holiday. I won't be a minute taking off my bonnet. I hope you are all as comfortably hungry as I am! I don't want any spare made to-day."

Three rosy faces, at any rate, smiled satisfaction at that statement, and turned once more approving glances upon the roast beef and sausage rolls, the jam puffs, marmalade, fancy bread, and large cake.

But the poor children were to prove the truth of the statement, that "There is many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip."

"You can make the tea, Molly, dear," said Mary, pausing at the foot of the stairs on the way up to take her bonnet off and smooth her hair. She had a new ruffle, and ribbon too, laid ready on the dressing-table, to put on in honour of Alec. "You can make the tea. I'll be down again directly."

"Ye—es, mother," answered Molly, with a grain of hesitation. She was a willing, unselfish little maiden, but she did feel that it would be a little bit hard if the others sat down and began tea that especial afternoon without her.

Her mother looked back at her with a touch of surprise on her countenance.

"Well, dear, what is it? Is the kettle over heavy for you, so full?"

"Oh, mother, no," was the half-indignant reply. "Besides, I lifted it on, you know. I was only thinking, shouldn't I fetch in Charlie first?"

"Aye, mother, I want our king," put in Sandy, as he danced the baby on to his shoulder, and stood up.

"Of course you do," was the very ready, positive answer. "What would any of us do without our little king? Fetch him in certainly, directly, Molly. What could you be thinking of, child, to let him stay out in this foggy mist that's come on?"

Molly's mouth and eyes opened in amazement at the question.

"Why, mother, however could I help it, as you never told me where to go for him?" she replied in an aggrieved tone. "I did ask Mrs. Fielder and Effie, but they didn't know."

"And pray, how should they know?" exclaimed Mrs. Yates, with a hitherto utterly unknown sharpness in her voice. A cloud, as small as a man's hand, had suddenly risen into the midst of her mind's sunny sky, and she came back into the kitchen.

"Whatever, child, should Mrs. Fielder or Effie know, or have to do with, your letting Charlie run in the garden?"

Molly began to cry. Like all the family, she was somewhat over-tired and excited, and her mother's unaccustomed touch of harshness very quickly turned the scale from smiles and laughter to tears.

"I don't know what you mean, mother. I haven't had anything to do with letting Charlie run in the garden. How could I when he wasn't here?"

"Wa— was not here?"

A choke in the mother's voice had broken that word of her sentence in half, a second choke hindered further speech for the moment. The trouble cloud was growing rapidly, spreading over the horizon, to the threatening of blotting out the sunlight altogether.

And the great shadow was infectious. Only small Effie had any eyes or thoughts to spare now for the outspread feast.

"Where is your brother, then?" was the sharp demand at last, with a resolute battling down of the lump in the throat. "Where is he, then, Molly? What have you done with him?"

"No—noth—nothing, mother," answered Molly, sobbing in earnest now. "Of course I haven't. You must know I haven't. I haven't seen him since he slipped his hand out of mine, and you put out yours and took it."

"I put out mine, and took it!" exclaimed Mary Yates, as much bewildered now as alarmed. "Why, Sandy," turning to her husband, "the girl must be dreaming, or have lost her wits. I haven't set eyes on Charlie, poor dear, sweet lambie, since we got up with the crowd at the town-hall. The people pushed me up so quickly, to get me inside the doors where I might have a sight of you and the directors, that I hadn't time or power to do more than see to Effie and baby. And I made so sure that Charlie was safe with Molly."

"So he was," asserted Molly through her sobs. "He was quite safe, and happy, too, till they set up that first great noisy hurrahing. That frightened him, and he begged so to go to you that I thought as you'd wish me to let him."

"Through all that crowd, dear Molly?" asked her father, with anxious gravity.

Molly shook her head. "We were almost close behind mother just then, and there was quite room for Charlie to get through. I could even see when she took his hand."

Mary shook her head now, and more emphatically than her daughter had done.

"That you never saw, child. Whose ever hand you saw take your brother's, it was not mine. The crowd closing up so quickly misled you. And I don't wonder the noise and bustle bewildered you; I felt off my head myself. I never ought to have taken you all into such a whirl."

Mrs. Yates was speaking more quietly now, although the cloud of trouble and anxiety was greater and darker than ever. But the expression on Molly's face, of dismay and apprehension, was beyond her years, and needed no addition. Both turned with mute appeal to Sandy.

With unconscious eloquence he put the helpless baby into its mother's arms, and then, having given her woman's truest earthly comforter, something helplessly dependent upon her loving care, the father put his arm around Molly, sat down again, and began to put quiet questions that should help to clear the affair up, as far as possible—at any rate let them all see how it stood.

"Now, Molly dear," he said gently, "try to leave off crying, there's a dear little lass, and help me to understand this business. You all got up to the edge of the crowd together this afternoon, I suppose?"

"Ye—yes," sobbed Molly. "First Freddy, then mother with baby, and Effie holding her gown, and I came last with Charlie."

"And why did you not keep Charlie with you then, lassie dear, if mother had trusted him to you?"

Molly's tears dropped heavily down.

"I wish I had! But he did beg so to go to mother. And I know that he scarcely ever wishes anything different to what he has—you and mother say he must wish it terrible bad when he does—and he did shake so, and look so white."

"Poor little lambie," sobbed the mother against her baby's cheek.

The arm quivered a little that was round Molly, but another question was put forthwith, somewhat gravely—

"Then why did you not take him up to mother yourself, at once?"

That question was easily answered. There was just a narrow groove in the crowd ahead of them, between them and mother, looking as if it was that minute made for Charlie, but they couldn't have got through both together without a deal of pushing.

"And mightn't ha' been able to reach mother at all then, for the people were that minute making her move on."

"Evidently made her move on too quickly for even Charlie to be able to reach her, either," sighed his father. "But, after all, it is foolish of us to be making up trouble and anxiety for ourselves like this, just for the sake of the poor little chap's temporary distress. If we didn't know that he must be safe enough it would be different."

Both the Marys lifted their eyes to his face eagerly, and both mouths at the same moment asked the same question—

"But how do we know—how can we know that he is safe?"

Sandy passed his hand affectionately over his daughter's fair hair.

"Did you not say, dear, that you saw, certainly saw a hand clasp Charlie's?"

Molly nodded her head. "Yes, father, I am quite perfectly positive I saw that. Of course I see now that it cannot have been mother's, as I thought. But I saw the hand of some grown-up person lift Charlie's, I do quite absolutely know, before the people pushed in front of me, so that I couldn't see either Charlie or mother any more."

"Ah! exactly so," was the quiet reply. "And of course that is why the owner of the friendly hand could not see you, and give the poor little man back to his proper guardians."

Mary's face began to clear, but too soon, as she said somewhat unthinkingly, "Friendly hand! Then you know, Sandy, who took Charlie?"

"No, indeed, I only wish I did," he answered. "I'd soon fetch him here. For however kind others may be to him, I know the little chap's heart belongs to us. But it seems to me to be clear enough that some motherly soul, seeing the child alone in that sea of people, took pity on its danger of getting trampled, and has him safe enough now for us, if we only knew where."

Mary re-tied her bonnet-strings. "I'll go round to the police-station at once, and learn if he has been mentioned there. Had any one seen to him who knew where he belonged they'd have brought him along before this. Don't cry any more, Molly; you'll make yourself ill, and that will only give more trouble."

Sandy took the baby from its mother, and gave it to Molly, kissing both as he did so.

"Don't cry any more, father's dear little daughter," he also said, in low, tender tones; "but pray the loving Lord to give our little king back to us very quickly."

Molly's heart had already been praying that, ever since her mother announced that it was not her hand that caught her brother's. She could but repeat the prayer as the cottage door closed upon her parents, hurrying out into the November fog in search of the absent darling.

Had they been gifted with a present vision of this helpless lamb lost from their small fold, their steps would have been even swifter than they were.

Meantime Molly sat on the hearthrug, dropping silent tears on to the sleeping baby; and Effie, and even Freddy, felt anxiety for Charlie's home-coming divided with hungry longing for their tea, and began to think that if he had been quite the wonderfully good boy they had thought him, he would have chosen some more convenient time for getting lost.

The minutes passed on. Tired-out Effie nodded drowsily, and finally slipped down on to the floor beside the table, fast asleep, a poor little disappointed creature, dreaming in baby fashion of being disappointed of everything she most wished for.

Freddy went and sat down by Molly on the hearthrug, saying not one word, but pressing up against her closely, whether to give or receive sympathy he could not have told. Perhaps for both.

More than an hour passed by. And then at last there was a sound of steps outside, the garden gate swung open, the gravel crunched on the little path, and the two elder children started to their feet. But the doubt of what the coming news was to be was too heavy upon them, it seemed, for them to do more. They stood together in front of the hearth, leaving those outside to open the door.

Their mother appeared first.

"Where is ——" began Molly.

"Have you found——" began Freddy. But their mother broke in upon both sentences in tones cold and hard from very intensity of mental pain.

"Freddy, lift the armchair—quick, boy—closer to the fire. Your father is taken faint."

As she spoke two men, one of them a policeman, entered the kitchen, supporting Sandy Yates between them.

"Cheer up, mate," said one of the men. "Don't you fear but what the little 'un will turn up all right."

"Please God," murmured Sandy's white lips. "But I've been pretty bad a while past in hospital, and I don't think I'm just fairly picked up quite again. That makes it a bit harder like, mebbe, to look hope as full in the face as usual."

He drank a little of the water his wife held to his lips, and then asked, in almost fainter tones than before—

"What do you think we had better do now, policeman?"

The officer glanced down pityingly at the poor father. "Well, mister, what I should advise would be for you to get to bed. We shall send telegrams around describing your child, and making all inquiries. And you'll be let know first thing in the morning what——"

"In the morning," interrupted Mary, with a gasp. "All the night to get through without knowing where our child is! Whether with friends or enemies, whether dead or alive."

She dropped down beside her husband, and laid her head upon his knees, feeling even too heart-sick to weep. And yet even now she did not know the full bitterness, nay, nor the half of it, of the cup that she was to be called upon to drink. But sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

At that moment the contemplation of a whole night—one night—of the endurance of suspense was well-nigh overwhelming. She could not have borne more.

"Poor wife, poor mother," murmured Sandy, as his unnerved hand rested upon the bowed head.

With rather choky "good-nights," the two strangers took their departure, and left the stricken family to the sacred privacy of its first great sorrow.

For some time after they were gone silence reigned in the kitchen. The parents were praying, Effie and the baby still slept, and the elder children, like the parents, were offering up mute prayers, Molly mingling scalding tears with hers, and manifold cogitations. She broke the silence at last.

"Why are you so much more miserable now, father, than when you went out? Have you heard anything worse about Charlie than his being lost?"

"We have heard nothing about him," was the quiet, hopeless-toned answer. "Nothing at all, Molly dear. That is the bad part of the business. When I went out to seek him I made so certain sure that we should hear of him at

one of the police-stations. And my only cause of sorrow was thinking how frightened and wretched the poor little chap would be away from all of us, and amongst strangers. But I made sure as they was good-hearted strangers."

"And how do you know they aren't, father?" eagerly asked Freddy, the mere mention of good-hearted strangers rousing hope in his heart that it was amongst such his little brother had fallen after all, in spite of the implied doubt. But his father shook his head.

"No good, kind-hearted creature who had simply caught hold of the child to save it from getting hurt in the crowd, would have been cruel enough to leave any stone unturned to give it back to its parents. Where is poor little Effie?—gone to sleep?"

Molly started at the question. It just occurred to her that she had not seen her sister since her parents left the cottage on their fruitless search.

"I—I—don't know where she is either," she gasped.

But in the silence of the pause of consternation that followed, the deep, even breathing of the sleeper behind the table became audible, and Effie was lifted up, kissed, and, still sleeping, laid in a more comfortable resting-place, to dream of the feast of which neither she nor any one had tasted.

CHAPTER XII.

A SOMEBODY FOR "NONEBODIES."

EIGHTEEN months passed away without one word of tidings of little lost Charlie.

"Extraordinarily clever his kidnappers must have been," declared the police.

But the thief was really nothing of the sort; only peculiarly favoured in her cruel wickedness by the conjunction of circumstances.

Meantime the bereavement, and the mystery attending it, tried Sandy Yates' weakened strength very terribly, and at last an over-strain in lifting a great heavy American trunk indirectly put the finishing touch to his duties as railway porter at Peterson.

Twice already, since his first accident, Sandy had returned to his bed in the hospital. First an attack of inflammation, following upon the hour's wandering in the fog that November night without food. Then a bruise on the before-broken leg, and now this sprain.

"And I tell you what it is, my poor fellow," said Dr. Clover, one morning, "I am afraid you are no longer strong enough for your present work. You must try for some lighter employment."

"I tell you what it is, old fellow," said a far-away, uppish sort of cousin, visiting him, as it so happened, the same day; "I tell you what it is. You must throw up this beggarly employment like a sensible man. You haven't the stamina for it, and it will just be a case of see-saw between platform and hospital till the end, if you persist, with more hospital than the other thing."

Sandy's pale face flushed painfully, and he passed his hand hurriedly over his eyes. He had to get rid of a lump in his throat before he could reply—

"I don't know, Batten, whether that seems a worse prospect to me than the alternative which you appear to advise, of making myself, and poor Mary and the children, eligible, without further loss of time, for admission to the workhouse."

Mr. Batten flung out his hands with a theatrical attitude, and burst into a sharp laugh. "Just listen to the fool!" he exclaimed, in an equally sharp tone.

But the utterer of the rude epithet reddened even as it escaped his thin lips, and it would evidently have been recalled had such a thing been possible. As it was, he could only endeavour to smooth it out of sight as far as might be with an apology, for he had a new scheme just now in his ever-scheming brain, that needed an honest, industrious fellow like his cousin Sandy to help him in making it a success.

The result was that the cousin's plausible tongue succeeded ere long in talking Sandy Yates and Mary over to his views. The offers he held out to them were certainly tempting, and promised Sandy a life of such comparative ease that even the doctors recommended him to accept the new opening forthwith.

A month or two after leaving the hospital Sandy drew out his own and his wife's savings from the bank, paid them over into the hands of his new senior partner, took a most friendly farewell of the railway folk, superiors and mates, who all had goodwill for Sandy, and then, with wife and bairns, bid adieu for the last time to Peterson and its railway station, and travelled hundreds of miles away.

But alas! for Mary and the children, the change did patient Sandy as much harm as good. Scarcely six short months passed by, and once more Sandy lay on a sick bed, and this time—dying.

"I am so sorry for you, too, about—about Charlie," murmured Mary through her tears, as she knelt beside the bed with her cheek beside her husband's on the pillow.

Sandy turned his head feebly, and kissed her again, with a few moments' silence ere he gave any further answer to her sorrowful lament.

"Dear, dear wife," he said at last, with a very depth of tenderness in his voice, "I do pray for you, that in God's good time He may see fit to lift this dark cloud from your life; but do not grieve for me any more. If it might have pleased our Lord to let me see our little king Charlie again, or, at the least, to hear news of him, I should have been most thankful. But—as it is not so—His will be done."

"Can you really say that, my darling, oh, my hardly-tried darling, from your very heart?" sobbed Mary.

"From my very heart, my dear one. It has not been so always with me, all through. But I know now that what the Father does is well, must be well. We shall meet, our darling and I, in the everlasting home, by the footstool of Almighty Love. I can wait, my Mary dear, for the minute in between to pass. May the dear Lord pity and forgive those who took him from us."

Two and more hundred miles away, on a bundle of dirty rags in a dark corner of a dirty room lay, moaning in the pain and restlessness of a wasting, untended fever, a little child, the unusual loveliness of whose face could not be disguised even by dirt, delirium, and cruel ill-usage.

Just then, ceasing the weary movements from side to side, the little creature struggled up into a kneeling posture, folded the burning hands together, and said in distinct, clear, sweet tones—

"God bless dear farver and muvver. 'Gentle Jesus, meek and mild, look upon a 'ittle child.' 'Look upon a 'ittle child.'"

A moment's pause; then a low, soft, pitiful moan, and the little voice speaking softly through the darkness—

"Will nonebodies kiss Charlie? Charlie's poor 'ittle head feel so achy bad. Will *nonebodies* kiss Charlie?"

There was a sound of a bursting, heart-broken sob—sound unwonted in that wretched room.

"I will," said a voice, half-strangled with remorse, and a sudden tempest of long-checked womanly tenderness.

(To be continued.)

GIRLS.

BY SARAH TYTLER.

V.—Sisters.

Our little woman is not alone in the world. We have given her a brother, and now we bestow on her a sister, perhaps several sisters. But generally out of any number there will be one, the nearest to her in age, it may be, or resembling her most in tastes, or specially linked to her by circumstances over which she may have had no control, or by acts of the tenderest affection, who will be, without any slight to the other sisters, her "favourite sister," as we say. The expression is not quite correct, for there is not necessarily any favour in the matter, rather close associations—as where twin sisters are concerned, or many points in unison—as in sisters of one heart and soul, or deeds of devotion as where one sister has ministered to the weaknesses and wants of another with ceaseless care and inexhaustible regard.

It is a pretty sight to see little sisters toddling along hand-in-hand, often dressed the same, sometimes, before character has impressed its individual stamp on each, curiously alike in their chubby cheeks, pouting lips, rings of flaxen or brown hair, eyes blue or hazel. We like to think of the tiny maids growing up, able to recall far more than Shakespeare's Hermia and Helena could have done, for they were only school-girl friends after all.

> "The sisters' vows, the hours that we have spent,
> When we have chid the hasty-footed time
> For parting us. * * *
> We, Hermia, like two artificial gods,
> Have with one needle created both one flower;
> Both on one sampler, sitting on one cushion,
> Both warbling of one song, both in one key,
> As if our hands, our sides, voices and minds
> Had been incorporate, so we grew together,
> Like to a double cherry, seeming parted
> But yet a union in partition;
> Two lovely berries moulded on one stem."

What do those cynical writers who deny the existence of friendship between women in general and sisters in particular, make of this picture? Of course they will tell you that there came an interruption to the friendship, but they cannot deny that it had an existence in the mind—most probably in the experience of so competent a judge of human nature as Shakespeare.

We would fain think of the little sisters who may be now pulling their buttercups and daisies or making their snow-balls in common, aye, and having their small pets and storms, to kiss and be friends the next moment, continuing friends, always joined together on an absolute equality, in work, in play, in prayer, in sleep, as no other human relationship can join them. For there is an essential difference between the relation of sister and brother and that of sisters or of brothers. The first supplies a lack in each nature, and the sister and brother fit into each other, the one giving what the other wants, as in the case of wife and husband. In the tie of sisters and of brothers, the friendship is founded on other and more level grounds, and has to rise superior to provocations, to rivalry, and contention, which in a great measure do not occur in the other relation.

For this reason I have been inclined to think that where the relation of sister to sister or of brother to brother exists in perfection it is in reality the most intimate and sympathetic, the most unselfish of all relations, the nearest to what we can imagine of our relation towards each other when we are "like unto the angels which are in Heaven."

But for this very cause, and since we are erring men and women, the relation of sisters, so lovely in itself, so kindly, sweet and dear, capable of being made a reflection of the higher, purer friendships of a better world, is liable to great and cruel abuse. The interests of sisters and brothers do not, as a rule, clash, whether the women and men are warmly attached or civilly indifferent. Brothers, taken apart, go out into the world, and each has his own career. They do not often, even when they are faithful comrades from first to last, dwell side by side. Of course if they are less than comrades there is no obligation on them—the world has never dreamt of such a thing—to spend their lives together while they may remain on perfectly friendly terms at a little distance. But until very recently there was so little argument for any independent action on the part of women in the upper classes, nay, there was so strong a prejudice against their working even for their daily bread, if it could possibly be avoided, that if they did not marry and form separate households, sisters, however uncongenial in temper and habits, however opposed in principle and practice, had perforce to stay under the same roof, partake of the same meals and be reckoned one family.

The injustice and absurdity of the obligation could only have been tolerated on the supposition that as women's education and capabilities were then regarded, there appeared to be no help for it. A good deal of that order of things is changed, but some of its effects are still keenly felt. It may be said that the old necessity offered a splendid opportunity for the cultivation of the passive virtues—self-restraint, patience, meekness; but it is to be feared it presented also a strong temptation to the rise and progress of many of the opposite errors of indignant self-assertion, irritability, and sullen resentment.

Until within the last twenty years the women of the *bonâ fide* working class had, in this respect, a great advantage over those who were held to be their more prosperous sisters. The working woman went out into the world, and

if she chanced to return to the old home, and if by a rarer chance she found it still in the possession—not of the old father and mother, with whose infirmities she was bound to bear tenderly, but of sisters engaged in some stay-at-home occupation, she could, if the conditions were not those which she could honestly and reasonably accept as likely to promote the well-being and happiness of all concerned, go out once more and find or make another home for herself, without the slightest shame or blame accruing to her, without even any offence inevitably given or taken by the relatives who recognised her right to shape her own life.

It is much to the credit of women, particularly of those women understood to be living at home at ease, that under a wholly artificial and unnatural system and code of propriety they conducted themselves with such forbearance, loving-kindness, and gentleness, no less than with the timidity and false seeming into which they were betrayed, that they succeeded in half-blinding themselves, as well as the world, to the real state of the case. For what in its happiest light, when hearty choice and not mere necessity or custom lay at the root of the sisterly establishment, should have been something of an earthly paradise, was, in truth, very much of an irksome prison where narrow tyranny and unjust usurpation prevailed. Quite as many rash and reckless marriages have been entered into, in order to escape from sisterly shackles, as to free unlucky brides from the control of parents who have neglected the apostolic injunction, and *have* provoked their children to anger.

All this is said in vivid remembrance of the bright, cheery, peaceful atmosphere which surrounds many a happy band of sisters. It surrounded notably the half-dozen kindly, witty spinsters, among whom Hannah More was included, at Barleywood, where the death of each "old maid" in turn, left a sorrowful blank which the love of those who were spared to each other could not fill up.

Love cannot be bought, neither can it always be fostered into growth; but if mothers and fathers would do their best to make their daughters the dearest of friends instead of mistresses and servants, despots and victims—and, oh! saddest overturn of the sweetest relation, covert opponents and enemies, let the parents not emulate the ostrich in shutting their eyes to certain possibilities, but rather look them courageously in the face, and, if it can be done, overcome them. Do not, I beseech you, lay down the law in a lordly manner and practically say, "While we, the *heads* of the house, are here, there shall be no open strife or secret dissatisfaction, we will not permit it. There must be at least all the outward signs of a united and attached family, were it only as a mark of respect for our example and training. Besides, we require it from our children, in order to secure the rest and quiet so welcome to declining years."

Instead, let the seniors look forward to the time when their controlling, restraining presence will be gone. Let them consider that their daughters may not all marry, but that two or three may be left single women. Try to foresee what their lives will be like. Calculate how one character will act and react on another. Think of what you know of the lives of other women similarly situated, and what you have heard and seen in some instances of domineering exactions made, and mean advantages taken, of the petty yet torturing persecution carried on by a soured and vindictive temper in a household of women.

Frankly admit family and individual faults and adopt the wisest measures for checking them in natures still young and plastic. Among such faults next to temper—cantankerous, morbid, capricious, violent, or peevish, the most fatal to family peace is rampant, craving vanity, with its common attendant, a restless and unappeasable jealousy. A child's vanity in respect to its beauty or its cleverness is easily excited, and as it is amusing enough, is often thoughtlessly pampered; while some grown people have been so infatuated as to welcome the display of jealousy in children, finding in it a proof of passionate love. But as perfect love casts out fear, so true love grudges no praise or favour shown to another, and no more doubts the love it reciprocates than it questions its own affectionate, trustful heart.

Guard against little acts of injustice peeping out in a family. Teach its members strictly to respect the rights of each—one cannot say this too often. As a matter of course the stronger nature must dominate the weaker, from youth to age; but where justice as well as love rules, nothing save good can come of the necessary sway on the one side and submission on the other.

The conditions of senior and junior may be used to bad ends. I have referred to this danger already in writing of brother and sister, but it is more threatening in the case of sisters whose interests and pursuits are progressively alike. Do not suffer the elder to arrogate more than their priority entitles them to. Do not let them take the lion's share of every pleasure or gain. Neither let the Queen Bee—as she is sometimes called in Sweden—be put upon, should she be as a Queen Bee ought—a second mother—full of goodness and dutifulness to her father and mother, and of devotion to her younger brothers and sisters.

Seek to make girls as independent in one sense as boys. Cultivate their individual tastes so that each may have her groove, her line—if it come to that, her career. They will not care for each other one whit less—rather all the more for it. Do not fall into the grand mistake of supposing that independence and individuality will render women unwomanly and unloving. The stronger they are, the more courageous they are, the more likely they are to be generous and kind. The consciousness of personal power will only introduce a happy and joyous freedom, a fresh and exhilarating breath of the open air, a wider prospect and horizon into the sacred charities, the sweet sympathies of true sisterhood.

SPRING CLEANING.

AFTER the wintry frost and snow and the cold dark days, we must all feel glad to see the bright sunshine and the nice light mornings and long afternoons. How much more work we can get through in the day when the days are bright and clear than we can in the short wintry days. The sunshine brings light and pleasure into our lives; it gives happiness to our little ones; it also lights up all the dark corners of our rooms, and shows us where the dust and dirt of the fires of winter have taken up their abode with us. Sometimes when we think that our houses are clean and wholesome, we are very much surprised to see dust lodging on the walls and resting in little recesses where we had never dreamed of looking for it. All this is very natural, and the same sort of thing must have been going on for years and years, for we are accustomed from our earliest years to talk about spring cleaning. Our mothers and grandmothers have handed us down a very good

example in fixing the spring of the year as a definite time for a special cleaning, and we must all have discovered that no matter how particular we are, and how carefully we clean the house all the year round, that an unusually great turning out of everything is necessary from time to time. Let us see how we can best set about the accomplishment of this task, so as to secure the greatest good with the least expenditure of time and labour.

There are certain things which are absolutely necessary, such as (1) *method and orderliness;* we must *think* before we begin, clear up everything as we go on, take care that when one thing or one room is finished it is not spoilt in the doing of something else. On no account should we turn out two or three cupboards or rooms at the same time; this only makes confusion and fuss and hurry, while one thing begun and finished clears the way for the next, and gives comfort and satisfaction to everybody. (2) *A hearty good will, with discretion* and common sense, will soon get through the work when it is once well planned. There is no time to be wasted when we are engaged in spring cleaning; we must be up early, and go on steadily through the day, and day after day, till all is done, but we must be careful not to overdo it; we must not attempt more in a day than we are equal to; it is necessary to get through the work, but it is also necessary to keep ourselves well. (3) *Soap, soda, brooms, covers,* must all be at hand at this time, for there is much sweeping, scrubbing, paint cleaning, etc., to be got through. Much trouble will be spared if the furniture is covered as much as possible before sweeping walls; and the long broom for wall-sweeping should be *clean;* it may be well washed and dried for the occasion. Carbolic soap should also be used both for cleaning the paint and for scrubbing tables, floors, etc.; it is clean and wholesome, and thoroughly cleanses everything it touches. Now, having made up our minds what we have to do and what we want for the work, let us see how we may best set about it.

1. *Turn out and clean thoroughly the cupboards and closets.* Put everything tidily away, and pack away in the closets as many small things, ornaments, etc., as you can possibly put there. Suppose we begin with a *bedroom.* Brush well the mattress and palliasse, cleanse the bedstead thoroughly, then, having put the bed straight, put upon it any small things that are still in the room, and cover well with a large dusting sheet or old quilt; put chairs and as much other furniture as possible outside on the landing, take up the carpets, then take a clean long broom and brush down well the walls and ceiling. It is a good plan, if paper is on the walls, to rub it down with a clean coarse cloth; it is astonishing to see how dirty the cloth will be after rubbing down the walls where there appeared to be no dirt. Of course the window blind and curtains have been removed before beginning; these should be well shaken and brushed ready for putting up again. The dust having been allowed to settle, the stove may be cleaned and the paint and the windows, then the floor well scrubbed. The blinds may now be put up and the windows made to look very neat, and by this time the carpet, which has been well beaten, may be laid down, and the furniture brought into the room, having been dusted before being brought in. The dusting sheet being removed, and the small articles which have been stowed away returned to their places, the bedroom will repay all the labour that has been bestowed upon it by the sweet smell and sense of freshness and brightness that pervades it, in addition to the satisfactory feeling of comfort which comes from the knowledge that there is "not a speck of dirt anywhere." Of course the washstand and the whole of its furniture have been as thoroughly cleansed as every other thing in the room.

One word before leaving the bedroom, though this is more a duty for the hot weather than the spring. English people have long loved feather beds, and these are often family relics. It is necessary that these should be unpicked, the feathers turned out and picked over, and the ticking washed from time to time, and the same remark holds good for the mattresses.

2. In the sitting-room where there have been fires all the winter, it will be necessary to have the chimney swept, and this should be done early in the morning of the day when that room is to be cleaned. If possible, the room should be got ready for the sweep the previous evening; if this cannot be done he cannot be engaged so early in the day. As much furniture as possible should be put out of the room, and the rest should be well covered up. The carpet may be beaten in the early part of the day, and it might hang on a line in the garden, where opportunity occurs, until it is to be put down again. The same method of cleaning walls and ceiling must be used as in the bedroom, and the paint all carefully cleaned, while the furniture should be well rubbed and polished and all ornaments washed.

3. The staircase needs very careful cleaning down. The walls, ledges on the tops of doors, ceilings, etc., all should be treated in the same way as in the rooms. The baluster rails and the hand-rail should be well washed with soap and water, like all the other paint of the house, and the mats should be thoroughly beaten.

4. The kitchen chimney must be swept, and everything on the dresser or in the china closets will need washing, while the doors, window-sashes, and all other painted parts need the same cleaning as in other rooms.

No part of the house should be neglected at this time of the year; the cellar and the garret require as careful cleansing as the rooms in which we receive our friends and visitors. Naturally, however, we begin at the top of the house. Much of course depends on the size of the house and the number of people in it. So much work as has been here suggested will take some time; one room may require two days before it can be set to rights, and one pair of hands cannot do all the work. Generally an extra hand is engaged to help at this time, but a charwoman, if engaged, must be looked after, and the mistress of the house must not only say what is to be done—she must see it done where she does not help to do it herself. It is neither safe nor wise nor kind to leave spring cleaning to a young servant girl. There is a very useful saying of the late Duke of Wellington, which all good housekeepers might adopt in such times as these; it is this: "If you want a thing done, see it done; if you want it done well, do it yourself."

J. Mears.

When cleaning paint or varnished woodwork use a painter's soft and rather large brush, instead of a flannel, with the soap and water. Do only a small piece at a time, and wipe it dry with a chamois leather. Varnished wall-paper should be cleaned in the same way, and if it is afterwards rubbed lightly with a soft duster it will look all the brighter.

The laths of Venetian blinds are best cleaned with a little powdered pumice stone and water, and then dried with a chamois leather. The pumice stone should be passed lightly over the laths so that it may not rub off any of the paint.

NAPLES.

MARY SOMERVILLE.

BY MRS. HENRY FAWCETT.

Mary Somerville, the most remarkable scientific woman our country has produced, was born at Jedburgh, in 1780. Her father was a naval officer, and in December, 1780, had just parted from his wife to go on foreign service for some years. She had accompanied her husband to London, and on returning home to Scotland was obliged to stay at the manse of Jedburgh, the home of her brother-in-law and sister, Dr. and Mrs. Somerville. Here little Mary was born, in the house of her uncle and aunt, who afterwards became her father and mother-in-law, for her second husband was their son. In the interesting reminiscences she has left of her life, she records the curious fact that she was born in the home of her future husband, and nursed by his mother.

Mary was of good birth on both sides. Her father was Admiral Sir William Fairfax, of the well-known Yorkshire family of that name, which had furnished a general to the Parliamentary army in the civil wars of the reign of Charles I. This family was connected with that of the famous American patriot, George Washington. During the American War of Independence, Mary Somerville's father, then Lieutenant Fairfax, was on board his ship on an American station, when he received a letter from General Washington claiming cousinship with him, and inviting the young man to pay him a visit. The invitation was not accepted, but Lieutenant Fairfax's daughter lived to regret that the letter which conveyed it had not been preserved.

Admiral Fairfax was concerned with Admiral Duncan in the famous victory of Camperdown, and gave many proofs that he was in every way a gallant sailor and a brave man. Mary Somerville's mother was of an ancient Scottish family named Charters. The pride of descent was very strongly marked among her Scotch relatives. Lady Fairfax does not seem much to have sympathised with her remarkable child. Mary, however, inherited some excellent qualities from both parents. Lady Fairfax was, in some ways, as courageous as her husband; notwithstanding a full allowance of Scotch superstitions and a special terror of storms and darkness, she had what her daughter called "presence of mind and the courage of necessity." On one occasion the house she was living in was in the greatest danger of being burned down. The flames of a neighbouring fire had spread till they reached the next house but one to that which she occupied. Casks of turpentine and oil in a neighbouring carriage manufactory were exploding with the heat. Lady Fairfax made all the needful preparations for saving her furniture, and had her family plate and papers securely packed. She assembled in the house a sufficient number of men to move the furniture out, if needs were. Then she quietly remarked, "Now let us breakfast; it is time enough for us to move our things when the next house takes fire." The next house, after all, did not take fire, and, while her neighbours lost half their property by throwing it recklessly into the street before the actual necessity for doing so had arisen, Lady Fairfax suffered no loss at all. The same kind of cool courage was often exhibited by Mary Somerville in later life On one occasion she stayed with her family at Florence during a severe outbreak of cholera there, when almost every one who could do so fled panic-stricken from the city.

During the long absences of Sir William Fairfax on foreign service, Lady Fairfax and her children led a very quiet life at the little seaside village of Burntisland, just opposite to Edinburgh, on the Firth of Forth. As a young child Mary led a wild, outdoor life, with hardly any education, in the ordinary sense of the word, though there is no doubt that, in collecting shells, fossils, and seaweeds, in watching and studying the habits and appearance of wild birds, and in gazing at the stars through her little bedroom window, the whole life of this wonderful child was really an education of the great powers of her mind. However, when her father returned from sea about 1789 he was shocked to find Mary "such a little savage"; and it was resolved that she must be sent to a boarding school. She remained there a year and learned nothing at all. Her lithesome, active, well-formed body was enclosed in stiff stays, with a steel busk in front; a metal rod, with a semicircle which went under the chin, was clasped to this busk, and in this instrument of torture she was set to learn columns of Johnson's dictionary by heart. This was the process which at that time went by the name of education in girls' schools. Fortunately she was not kept long at school. Mary had learned nothing, and her mother was angry that she had spent so much money in vain. She would have been content, she said, if Mary had only learnt to write well and keep accounts, which was all that a woman was expected to know. After this Mary soon commenced the process of self-education, that only ended with her long life of ninety-two years. She not only learnt all she could about birds, beasts, fishes, plants, eggs, and seaweeds, but she also found a Shakespeare which she read at every moment when she could do so undisturbed. A little later her mother moved into Edinburgh for the winter, and Mary had music lessons, and by degrees taught herself Latin. The studious bent of her mind had now thoroughly declared itself; but till she was about fourteen she had never received a word of encouragement about her studies. At that age she had the good fortune to pay a visit to her uncle and aunt at Jedburgh, in whose house she had been born. Her uncle, Dr. Somerville, was the first person who ever encouraged and helped her in her studies. She ventured to confide in him that she had been trying to learn Latin by herself, but feared it was no use. He reassured her by telling her of the women in ancient times who had been classical scholars. He moreover read Virgil with her for two hours every morning in his study. A few years later than this she taught herself Greek enough to read Xenophon and Herodotus, and in time she became sufficiently proficient in the language to thoroughly appreciate its greatest literature.

One of the most striking things about her was the many-sided character of her mind. Some people—men as well as women—who are scientific or mathematical seem to care for nothing but science or mathematics; but it may be truly said of her that "Everything was grist that came to her mill." There was hardly any branch of art or knowledge which she did not delight in. She studied painting under Mr. Nasmyth in Edinburgh, and he declared her to be the best pupil he had ever had. Almost to the day of her death she delighted in painting and drawing. She was also an excellent musician and botanist. The special study with which her name will always be associated was mathematics as applied to the study of the heavens, but she also wrote on physical geography and on microscopic science. It is sometimes thought that if women are learned they are nearly sure to neglect their domestic duties, or that, in the witty words of Sydney Smith, "if women are permitted to eat of the tree of knowledge, the rest of the family will soon be reduced to some aërial and unsatisfactory diet." Mrs. Somerville was a living proof of the folly of this opinion. She was an excellent housewife and a particularly skilful needlewoman. She astonished those who thought a scientific woman could not understand anything of cookery by her notable preparation of black currant jelly for her husband's throat on their wedding journey. On one occasion she supplied with marmalade, made by her own hands, one of the ships that were being fitted out for a Polar expedition. She was a most loving wife and tender mother as well as a devoted and faithful friend. She gave up far more time than most mothers do to the education of her children. Her love of animals, especially of birds, was very strongly developed. With all her devotion to science she was horrified at the barbarities of vivisection, and cordially supported those who have successfully exerted themselves to prevent it from spreading in England to the same hideous proportions which it has reached on the continent of Europe. Many pages of one of her learned works were written with a little tame mountain sparrow sitting on her shoulder. On one occasion, having been introduced to the Hon. Mountstuart Elphinstone, she says he quite won her heart by exclaiming, in reference to the number of little birds that were eaten in Italy, "What! robins! Eat a robin! I would as soon eat a child."

Her first husband, Mr. Samuel Greig, only lived three years after their marriage in 1804. He appears to have been one of those men of inferior capacity, who dislike and dread intellectual power in women. He had a very low opinion of the intelligence of women, and had himself no interest in, nor knowledge of, any kind of science. When his wife was left a widow with two sons at the early age of twenty-seven, she returned to her father's house in Scotland, and worked

steadily at mathematics. She profited by the instructions of Professor Wallace, of the University of Edinburgh, and gained a silver medal from one of the mathematical societies of that day. Nearly all the members of her family were still loud in their condemnation of what they chose to regard as her eccentric and foolish behaviour in devoting herself to science instead of society. There was, however, an exception. Her Uncle and Aunt Somerville and their son William did not join in the chorus of disapprobation which her studies provoked. With them she found a real home of loving sympathy and encouragement. In 1812 she and her cousin William were married. His delight and pride in her during their long married life of nearly fifty years were unbounded. For the first time in her, life she now had the daily companionship of a thoroughly sympathetic spirit. Much of what the world owes to her it owes indirectly to him, because he stimulated her powers, and delighted in anything that brought them out. He was in the medical department of the army, and scientific pursuits were thoroughly congenial to him. He had a fine and well cultivated mind which he delighted in using to further his wife's pursuits. He searched libraries for the books she required, "copying and recopying her manuscripts to save her time." In the words of one of their daughters, "No trouble seemed too great which he bestowed upon her; it was a labour of love." When Mrs. Somerville became famous through her scientific writings, the other members of her family, who had formerly ridiculed and blamed her, became loud in her praise. She knew how to value such commendation in comparison with that which she had constantly received from her husband. She wrote about this: "The warmth with which my husband entered into my success deeply affected me; for not one in ten thousand would have rejoiced at it as he did; but he was of a generous nature, far above jealousy, and he continued through life to take the kindest interest in all I did." Mrs. Somerville's first work, "The Mechanism of the Heavens," would probably never have been written but at the instance of Lord Brougham, whose efforts were warmly supported by those of Mr. Somerville. In March, 1827, Lord Brougham, on behalf of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, wrote a letter begging Mrs. Somerville to write an account of Newton's "Principia" and of La Place's "Mécanique Céleste." In reference to the latter book he wrote, "In England there are now not twenty people who know this great work, except by name, and not a hundred who know it even by name. My firm belief is that Mrs. Somerville could add two cyphers to each of these figures." Mrs. Somerville was overwhelmed with astonishment at this request. She was most modest and diffident of her own powers, and honestly believed that her self-acquired knowledge was so greatly inferior to that of the men who had been educated at the universities, that it would be the height of presumption for her to attempt to write on the subject. The persuasions of Lord Brougham and of her husband at last prevailed so far that she promised to make the attempt; on the express condition, however, that her manuscript should be put into the fire unless it fulfilled the expectations of those who urged its production. "Thus suddenly," she writes, "the whole character and course of my future life was changed." One is tempted to believe that this first plunge into authorship was, to some extent, stimulated by a loss of nearly all their fortune which had a short time before befallen Mr. and Mrs. Somerville. Before authorship has become a habit, the whip of poverty is often needed to rouse a student to the exertion and labour it requires. The impediments to authorship in Mrs. Somerville's case were more than usually formidable. In the memoirs she has left of this part of her life, she speaks of the difficulty which she experienced as the mother of a family and the head of a household in keeping any time free for her work. It was only after she had attended to social and family duties that she had time for writing, and even then she was subjected to many interruptions. The Somervilles were then living at Chelsea, and she felt at that distance from town, it would be ungracious to decline to receive those who had come out to call upon her. But she groans at the remembrance of the annoyance she sometimes felt when she was engaged in solving a difficult problem, by the entry of a well-meaning friend, who would calmly announce, "I have come to spend an hour or two with you." Her work, to which she gave the name of "The Mechanism of the Heavens," progressed, however, in spite of interruptions, to such good purpose that in less than a year it was complete, and it immediately placed its author in the first rank among the scientific thinkers and writers of the day. She was elected an honorary member of the Astronomical Society, at the same time with Caroline Herschel, and honours and rewards of all kinds flowed in upon her. Her bust, by Chantrey, was placed in the great hall of the Royal Society, and she was elected an honorary member of the Royal Academy of Dublin, and of many other scientific societies. It was a little later than this, in 1835, that Sir Robert Peel, on behalf of the Government, conferred a civil list pension of £200 a year upon Mrs. Somerville; the announcement of this came almost simultaneously with the news of the loss of the remainder of her own and her husband's private fortune, through the treachery of those who had been entrusted with it. The public recognition of her services to science came therefore at a very appropriate time; the pension was a few years later increased to £300 a year by Lord John Russell.

Throughout her life Mrs. Somerville was a staunch advocate of all that tended to raise up and improve the lot of women. When quite a young girl she was stimulated to work hard by the feeling that it was in her power thus to serve the cause of her fellow women. Writing of the period when she was only sixteen years old, she says: "I must say the idea of making money had never entered my head in any of my pursuits, but I was intensely ambitious to excel in something, for I felt in my own breast that women were capable of taking a higher place in creation than that assigned to them in my early days, which was very low." It is interesting to observe that her enthusiasm for what are sometimes called "women's rights," was as warm at the end of her life as it had been at its dawn. When she was eighty-nine, she was as keen as she had been at sixteen for all that lifts up the lot of women. She was a firm supporter of Mr. John Stuart Mill in the effort he made to extend to women the benefit and protection of Parliamentary representation. She recognised that many of the English laws are unjust to women, and clearly saw that there can be no security for their being made just and equal until the lawmakers are chosen partly by women and partly by men. The first name to the petition in favour of women's suffrage which was presented to Parliament by Mr. J. S. Mill in 1868 was that of Mary Somerville. She also joined in the first petition to the Senate of the London University, praying that degrees might be granted to women. At the time, this petition was unsuccessful, but its prayer was granted within a very few years. One cannot but regret that Mrs. Somerville did not live to see this fulfilment of her wishes. She showed her sympathy with the movement

for the higher education of women, by bequeathing her mathematical and scientific library to Girton College. It is one of the possessions of which the college is most justly proud. The books are enclosed in a very beautifully designed case, which also forms a sort of frame-work for a cast of Chantrey's bust of Mrs. Somerville. The fine and delicate lines of her beautiful face offer to the students of the college a worthy ideal of completely developed womanhood, in which intellect and emotion balance one another and make a perfect whole.

Mrs. Somerville's other works, written after "The Mechanism of the Heavens," were "The Connection of the Physical Sciences," "Physical Geography," and "Molecular and Microscopic Science." The last book was commenced after she had completed her eightieth year. Her mental powers remained unimpaired to a remarkably late period, and she also had extraordinary physical vigour to the end of her life. She affords a striking instance of the fallacy of supposing that intellectual labour undermines the physical strength of women. Her last occupations, continued till the actual day of her death, were the revision and completion of a treatise on "The Theory of Differences," and the study of a book on "Quaternions." Her only physical infirmity in extreme old age was deafness. She was able to go out and enjoy life up to the time of her death, which took place in 1872 at the great age of ninety-two years.

She was a woman of deep and strong religious feeling. Her beautiful character shines through every word and action of her life. Her deep humility was very striking, as was also her tenderness for, and her sympathy with, the sufferings of all who were wretched and oppressed. One of the last entries in her journal refers again to her love of animals, and she says, "Among the numerous plans for the education of the young, let us hope that mercy may be taught as a part of religion." The reflections in these last pages of her diary give such a lovely picture of serene, noble, and dignified old age that they may well be quoted here. They show the warm heart of the generous woman, as well as the trained intellect of a reverent student of the laws of nature. "Though far advanced in years, I take as lively an interest as ever in passing events. I regret that I shall not live to know the result of the expedition to determine the currents of the ocean, the distance of the earth from the sun determined by the transits of Venus, and the source of the most renowned of rivers, the discovery of which will immortalise the name of Dr. Livingstone. But I regret most of all that I shall not see the suppression of the most atrocious system of slavery that ever disgraced humanity—that made known to the world by Dr. Livingstone and by Mr. Stanley, and which Sir Bartle Frere has gone to suppress, by order of the British Government." A later entry still, and the last, gives another view of her happy, faithful spirit. The Admiral's daughter speaks in it: "The Blue Peter has been long flying at my foremast, and now that I am in my ninety-second year I must soon expect the signal for sailing. It is a solemn voyage, but it does not disturb my tranquillity. Deeply sensible of my utter unworthiness, and profoundly grateful for the innumerable blessings I have received, I trust in the infinite mercy of my Almighty Creator." She then expresses her gratitude for the loving care of her daughters, and her journal concludes with the words, "I am perfectly happy." She died and was buried at Naples. Her death took place in her sleep, on November 29th, 1872. Her daughter writes, "Her pure spirit passed away so gently that those around her scarcely perceived when she left them. It was the beautiful and painless close of a noble and happy life." Wordsworth's words about old age were fully realised in her case—

> "Thy thoughts and feelings shall not die,
> Nor leave thee when grey hairs are nigh,
> A melancholy slave;
> But an old age, serene and bright,
> And lovely as a Lapland night,
> Shall lead thee to thy grave."

THE PRESENCE OF THE LORD.

(Psalm cxxxix.)

when he sinned.

IT is impossible to hide from God. As this psalm shows us, He is omnipresent, that is, He is everywhere, in every place, at the same moment, and to escape either from His eye or His power is impossible. Is this a disturbing, terrifying thought to us; or is it a cause of joy and deep thankfulness?

We see what King David felt about it. The whole psalm is full of praise and rejoicing that he was so encompassed by the presence of God. He would not have wished it otherwise; in fact, so far from it, do you remark how earnestly he pleads that God would search him through and through? There was no dark corner of his heart from which he wished the light excluded, and the reason was this: in spite of grievous falls and inconsistencies he was truly a child of God, and he was never happy at the hiding of his Heavenly Father's face Like Peter, he repented bitterly; and in that psalm (the 51st) of utter self-abasement and deep contrition, after entreating that his sins might be blotted out and washed away, he prays, "Restore unto me the *joy of Thy salvation*."

For "the presence of the Lord is salvation" (Ps. xlii. 5, margin), and it was that near, conscious, *intimate* presence of his God for which he longed. There is a wonderful verse in Isaiah lvii. 15, in which the Lord describes His *greatness* and His *dwelling-place:* "Thus saith the high and lofty One, that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy: I dwell in the high and holy place, *with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit*, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones."

The presence of the Lord is not only *salvation*, it is *separation* (Ex. xxxiii. 15-16). There is a line, a dividing line, clear and distinct, which separates God's people from the people of the world. Sometimes this line stands out so brightly that all the world may see it. This is when love and joy and trust are burning with a pure and steady flame; when the believer's faith is so strong that nothing on earth can move it; when the believer's life is so "hid with Christ in God" that no one can help seeing that both heart and treasure are already in heaven. The happiest of all living creatures are these whole-hearted Christians, for when sorrow comes to them (as come it must to all) they are able

to realise, as none else can, how quickly this world is passing away, and that their present affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for them "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (2 Cor. iv. 17). No wonder they go on their way rejoicing!

How, then, shall it be known that *we* have found grace in God's sight? "Is it not in that *Thou goest with us? so shall we be separated.*" You see it is the presence of the Lord that causes the wide difference between those who have it and those who have it not.

But too often the line of separation, though distinct and absolute in God's sight, is scarcely visible to human eyes. And why? It is because too many Christians follow "afar off." They *really* follow; they really choose Christ and His service; they really come to Him for pardon and cleansing (and they receive both); but it is more for safety than for love they come. They know the Lord Jesus as their *Saviour*, but they know nothing of Him as the "Friend that sticketh closer than a brother;" they are strangers to that heart-communion which is a foretaste of heaven. They are, indeed, *safe*, because they have thus come, but they lose blessing and comfort and joy and power, because they do not come *more near*.

It was only John, of all the Apostles, who leaned upon Jesus' breast. But had the others cared, or dared, to be so blest, they might have had the same inestimable privilege. For the boldness of love is altogether distinct from the boldness of presumption, and Divine love never has repulsed, *and never will*, the trembling hand of faith that touches Him, and the humble heart of trusting and adoring love that leans upon Him.

Then, again, the presence of the Lord is a safe *hiding-place from the strife of tongues* (Ps. xxxi. 20). Ah, what misery a sharp, unkind tongue can make! In Job v. 21 it is fitly called a scourge; for as the scourge—that cruel whip of knotted ropes—bruised and tore the flesh of those who were punished by it, so do cruel words cut to the heart and make deep, aching, bleeding wounds there—wounds which sometimes take very long to heal. Which of us have not at one time or another suffered from it? Well for us if the scourge was altogether undeserved, "for it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well-doing than for evil-doing."

But perhaps you may be thinking "How can the presence of the Lord hide us from the strife of tongues? Will it prevent others from railing on us?" No, it will not do that; but cannot you see that if we are hidden in the secret of His presence, if we are safe in His arms and sheltered on His breast, none of these barbed arrows, these stinging words, can injure us? The very thought, "My Father knows; my Father cares; my Father hears," is an antidote to the poison. The certainty that He will "undertake" for us, is perfect peace and comfort. Heart-wounds never fester where the presence of the Lord is.

Then, the presence of the Lord is *rest* (Ex. xxxiii. 14). Yes, though the wilderness journey may appear long and troublous, and clouds may sometimes seem to hide the sky, yet, *under every circumstance*, if Christ is with us we have rest, sweet rest, in our souls. When the way seems most difficult, and our earthly props are gone, and our loved ones are transplanted to the Home above, and our path seems solitary, yet, if we listen, above the storm, and the raging waves and billows, we shall never fail to hear the Saviour's voice, "Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid!" *And this is rest.*

H. M.

AFTER THE STORM.

Lieth so calm in the sunshine
  Worn cliff and wave-beaten strand,
And the white foam-wreaths play gently
  Over the glittering sand.

For the stern tempest is over,
  Hushed is its desolate roar,
And the soft waters are whisp'ring
  Tidings of peace on the shore.

Say, will the sweet calm be lasting?
  Is the rude storm hushed for aye?
Gladness of earth and of heaven,
  Say, wilt thou not pass away?

Nay, though the wild wind seem vanquished,
  It must return to the strife;
Sorrow and storm cannot vanish
  Out of this death-stricken life.

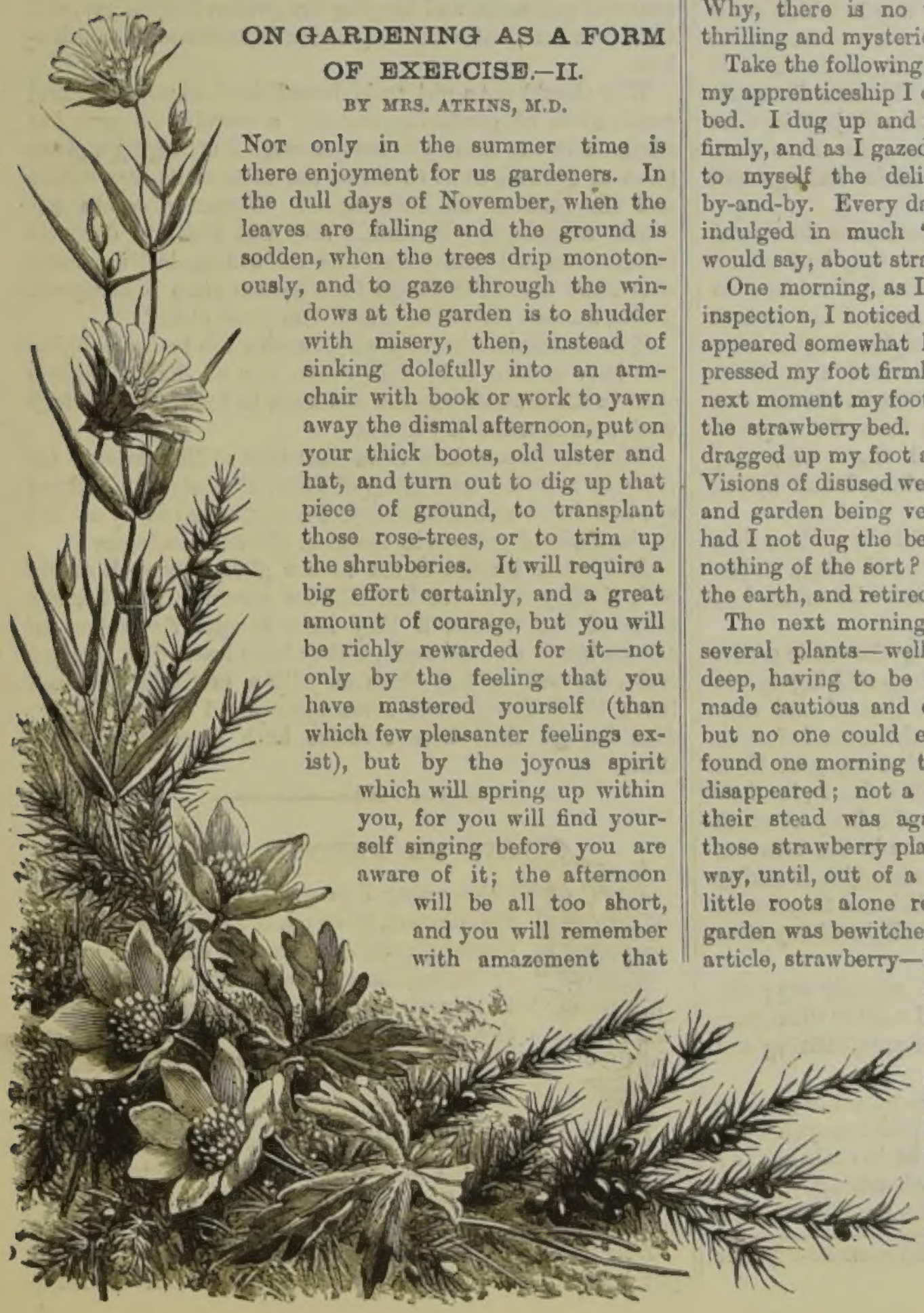
Yet there's a peace that may ever
  Shed its beneficent balm
Over thy heart and thy spirit,
  Keeping thee sweetly in calm.

Peace of the Lord who redeemed thee,
  Peace through the blood that He shed,
Peace of thy Saviour who liveth,
  Risen again from the dead.

Peace of a Friend ever near thee,
  Ruling the wind and the wave,
Peace of a Friend ever faithful,
  Mighty to succour and save.

And when the last storm is over,
  Hushed is the last billow's roar,
Thou with thy Lord shalt inherit
  Fulness of peace evermore!

SARAH GERALDINA STOCK.



ON GARDENING AS A FORM OF EXERCISE.—II.

BY MRS. ATKINS, M.D.

NOT only in the summer time is there enjoyment for us gardeners. In the dull days of November, when the leaves are falling and the ground is sodden, when the trees drip monotonously, and to gaze through the windows at the garden is to shudder with misery, then, instead of sinking dolefully into an armchair with book or work to yawn away the dismal afternoon, put on your thick boots, old ulster and hat, and turn out to dig up that piece of ground, to transplant those rose-trees, or to trim up the shrubberies. It will require a big effort certainly, and a great amount of courage, but you will be richly rewarded for it—not only by the feeling that you have mastered yourself (than which few pleasanter feelings exist), but by the joyous spirit which will spring up within you, for you will find yourself singing before you are aware of it; the afternoon will be all too short, and you will remember with amazement that never a yawn has stretched your jaws, and will recognise with pleasure, when the dinner-hour comes, that you are as hungry as a hunter.

Even in frosty weather, when digging, pruning, and transplanting are out of the question—for the earth is fast bound and rings under our feet—there is a joy still remaining to us beyond the beauty of the hoar-frost on the trees and the icicles hanging from the roof, a joy unknown to most women, and which on the coldest day will make them glow with heat in ten minutes—sawing wood!

Do not scorn the suggestion, my reader, but try it, and when you see the even logs of wood dropping down beside you; when you think how they will crackle and spirt on the fire; when you study the grain of the different woods and learn to read their history on their smooth faces; when you feel how the warm blood is circulating through your whole body and the fresh air penetrating to the innermost recesses of your lungs—then surely you will scorn me no more, but will cordially share my enthusiasm.

I have often heard it said that gardening is monotonous. Why, there is no trade or profession in which such thrilling and mysterious events occur.

Take the following as one of many: In the first year of my apprenticeship I determined to make a large strawberry bed. I dug up and manured the ground, planted the roots firmly, and as I gazed at my handiwork admiringly, pictured to myself the delicious strawberries we should enjoy by-and-by. Every day I had a look at that bed, and, I fear, indulged in much "tall talk," as our American cousins would say, about strawberry parties, etc.

One morning, as I went to make my usual self-satisfied inspection, I noticed that the earth round one of the plants appeared somewhat loose. So I stepped on the bed, and pressed my foot firmly on the earth to stamp it down; the next moment my foot had disappeared and I lay prone across the strawberry bed. What in the world had happened? I dragged up my foot and found it had sunk into a deep hole. Visions of disused wells and drains came before me, the house and garden being very old. But no, that could not be, for had I not dug the bed myself, a good spit deep, and found nothing of the sort? I filled up the hole, pressed down the the earth, and retired pondering.

The next morning I found the same condition round several plants—well-formed, round holes, more or less deep, having to be filled up. What could it mean? I made cautious and diplomatic inquiries in my household, but no one could enlighten me. Then, to my horror, I found one morning that two strawberry plants had totally disappeared; not a trace of them was to be seen, but in their stead was again a deep, round hole. One by one those strawberry plants disappeared in this unaccountable way, until, out of a hundred fine specimens, six starveling little roots alone remained. I really began to think the garden was bewitched. I read every book on gardening—article, strawberry—I could lay my hands on, but no one ever seemed to have endured such a calamity before as the total disappearance of their strawberry plants. I grew haggard and anxious; I lost my faith in the immutability of Nature's laws, and every evening I took a fond farewell of the elm-tree on the lawn, not knowing how soon the hour might come when it, too, would disappear, leaving only a hole behind.

One day a labouring man, an unedu-

cated man, a man who had certainly never read a work on gardening in his life, came into the garden to repair a wall. I was standing, as, indeed, was frequently the case, before the devastated strawberry bed, and as he passed me he glanced at it.

"Oh," he said, "they have been very bad there; but then they have been terrible bad everywhere this year."

"What's been bad?" I asked.

"Why, them moles."

"Moles!" I exclaimed. "Moles don't eat strawberry plants."

"No," he replied, with a grin I could have shaken him for, "they don't eat 'em, but when they are going to have little 'uns, they just get hold of any nice young plants they can, by the roots, where the earth has been freshly dug, and carry 'em off to line their holes with to make them comfortable like."

Now honestly, can an occupation wherein such events occur be called monotonous? And such events are constantly happening.

Take as another instance the magic way in which seeds come up, yards away from where they were sown. After this had occurred to me several times, I began to think it would be better to sow the seeds some distance from the place I wished them to grow, but I found out just in time that the disturbers of my arrangements were the worms, who dragged away the seeds through their underground passages.

What lessons, also, in pluck and perseverance do we not get from our flowers! Last summer, when they had ceased blooming, I dug up some anemones, which I wished to transplant; but the leaves being still green I had to heel in * the plants until they were ready to place in their new position. Other duties, however, intervened and drove them out of my mind, so that not until late in the autumn did I remember my anemones. By that time of course the leaves had completely died away, and there was, consequently, no guide to the exact spot where I had heeled them in.

Vainly I turned the earth over about the place where they should have been, but no trace of them could I find, and at last in despair I gave in, concluding that the moles had made away with them also.

About a fortnight ago, as I was passing the same corner of the garden, I saw two little green things sticking up out of the ground, and, stooping to look at them, found they were anemone leaves. I gently removed the mound of earth from which they arose, and discovered that my poor little plants had sent out long straggling white shoots, in their efforts to get to the light from under the heap of earth which I had formed when digging for them in the autumn. They were feeble and sickly from their struggles, breaking at the slightest touch; but like true Britons they would not give in until they had attained to the light of day after which they sought.

How tenderly I raised them I need scarcely say; the warmest corner of the garden was picked out for them, as a reward for their pluck, and there they are now, thriving and resting from their labours.

Then what excitement there is in some phases of gardening, as, for example, in digging up the potatoes you have planted. How many tubers will there be to each haulm? Will they be large or small, sound or grub-eaten? As the fork prizes them up you pounce upon them, and great is the delight when a monster potato appears, wild the excitement when three or four are turned up.

What pleasure there is, also, in circumventing the birds, when they want to get at your peaches—what despair when they rob you of your crop of peas.

No, gardening is not monotonous: it is as exciting as it is healthful, and if I had a dozen daughters I would try and teach them all to love it, not alone for their physical, but also for their moral and mental health. For where can we find another teacher who so thoroughly inculcates patience, perseverance, forethought, self-control, and self-reliance at so small a cost either in money or time?

Why, also, should not women revive an old profession, which has fallen greatly into desuetude, and which has never, to my knowledge, been practised by women—that of landscape gardening? Those persons who possess a garden, but have no time, or do not consider themselves competent, to look after it themselves, fall inevitably into the hands of the gardener, who, with the conservatism of his class, goes on year after year bedding out his little plants, sowing his conventional seeds, and keeping the garden bright, gay, and trim, it is true, but absolutely commonplace and expressionless.

Why should not a girl train herself in the knowledge and possibilities of gardening, and for a certain fee give her advice as to the most picturesque way of managing a given piece of ground, so as to make the most of its capabilities and the best of its deformities? Women decorate our houses nowadays; why should they not learn to decorate our gardens, and teach those who are willing, but ignorant, that there are other things for a garden than bedding-out plants, annuals for edgings, and trim grass plots?

How much more healthy would such a life be for our girls who have to earn their living, than any of the professions open to them which entail a residence in town, or sedentary work even in a country house.

What study combines more than that of Nature, care for minutiæ with a broad grasp of facts, thorough training of eye and hand with the faculty of recognising beauty as well in the blade of grass as in the most glorious landscape?

And when trouble comes to our girls, as come it surely will, if they have watched Nature carefully and learned some of her secrets, if they have taught themselves to admire her in all her moods, if they have learned to love her truly, she will comfort them as with a mother's love, and teach them there is still some beauty and interest in life, even though their heart's desire hath been taken from them.

* To "heel in" plants is merely to place the roots all together in a hole and cover them with earth.

HOW TO FEED A FAMILY.—IV.

IN this paper I propose to give directions for two dinners, to be cooked on Saturday. The second dinner can be eaten cold on Sunday, or warmed in the oven; but in either case there will be no cooking necessary on Sunday. The Saturday dinner will consist of ox-cheek soup, beef pasties, and tapioca pudding.

Ox-cheek Soup.

Materials.—Half an ox-cheek, chopped into pieces by the butcher; 2 onions; 1 turnip; 1 carrot; a sprig each of parsley, marjoram, and thyme; flour, 2 tablespoonfuls; pepper and salt.

How to make it.—Wash the ox-cheek well in two waters; put it on to stew in three quarts of cold water. When it

has simmered for three quarters of an hour (it must not boil), take the bones out, cut from them all the meat (which should fill a good-sized pie-dish), and put the bones back into the soup. Add the vegetables, sliced thin, and boil for two hours, skimming off the fat. Then take out the bones (which should be put into fresh water, with a little salt, and boiled for more soup), mix two tablespoonfuls of flour with a little of the soup, cooled; return this to the rest, brown the soup with two bits of white sugar burnt in a leaden spoon; add pepper, salt, and the three sprigs of herbs (tied together with string, with a loop to it), and bring the soup to the boil. Take out the bunch of herbs with a fork, by the looped string, and serve half the soup (which should be rather more than two quarts in all).

BEEF PASTIES.

Materials.—A third of the meat cut from the ox-cheek as above; the same weight in cold potatoes; Yorkshire relish, 1 tablespoonful; gravy (from the ox-cheek soup), 1 tablespoonful; salt and pepper to taste.

N.B.—The following materials for pastry will make enough crust for the pasties, and also the pie, as below:—1 lb. flour; clarified fat, 6 ozs.; baking powder and salt, 1 teaspoonful each; a little water.

Directions.—Make pastry of the flour, baking powder, salt, and water. Take half of it, roll it out thin, and cut it into rounds, six inches across. Mince the meat, crush the potatoes (cut in pieces) with the bottom of a small jam-pot on a board, mix the meat, potato, Yorkshire relish, and gravy together in a basin, with a little pepper and salt. Place a tablespoonful of the mixture on each round of pastry, double it over, press the edges together with a floured fork, and bake in a hot oven for about fifteen minutes, turning them round when they have been in the oven ten minutes.

TAPIOCA PUDDING.

Materials.—Tapioca, 1 teacupful; milk, 1 quart; sugar, 2 tablepoonfuls; butter, 1 oz.

How to make it.—Put the tapioca into a pie-dish which will hold three pints; mix the sugar thoroughly with the milk, and add it and the butter to the tapioca. Bake it for an hour and a half, stirring it twice when hot through, at ten minutes' interval, to prevent it sticking to the dish as it swells.

I have given you the dishes in the order in which they will be served; but you will see that this pudding should be made before the pasties, as it takes longer to cook. A milk pudding is easily made, and very good for children; but if you have not room in the oven for so much baking, the sum allowed for this pudding (sixpence) can be spent on six jam sandwiches, or twelve small sponge cakes, at the pastrycook's, as the dinner for Sunday has to be cooked also.

The expenses for both dinners are reckoned together at the end of this paper, because the ox-cheek supplies meat and soup for both days.

We will now consider the Sunday dinner. The soup will be the other half of that made on Saturday as above, thoroughly warmed. (If variety is needed, half a teaspoonful of curry-powder may be added, or it may be flavoured with a little celery salt.)

OX-CHEEK PIE.

Materials.—The rest of the meat from the ox-cheek (after making the pasties); 1 turnip; 4 cold potatoes; 2 onions; 2 tablespoonfuls of flour; 1 tablespoonful Yorkshire relish; 1 teacupful of stock from the bones; the pastry left (*i.e.*, half the quantity made) from making the pasties; salt and pepper to taste; milk, 1 tablespoonful.

How to make it.—Wash, pare, and slice the vegetables; mix two tablespoonfuls of flour with two teaspoonfuls of salt and a little pepper; dip the slices of meat in this, and lay some of them in a greased pie-dish, then a layer of sliced turnip, onion, and potato, then more meat, and so on till the dish is full. Mix the Yorkshire relish with a teacupful of stock from the ox-cheek bones; pour it over the meat, etc.; cover with the pastry, wet this over the top with milk, and place it in a hot oven for twenty minutes; then move it to the cooler side of the oven, and let it cook slowly for an hour or more.

FAVOURITE PUDDING.

Materials.—1 lb. stale bread; 4 ozs. clarified fat, or dripping; ½ lb. raisins; 1 egg; 2 tablespoonfuls sugar; 1½ pints milk; 6 lumps white sugar.

How to make it.—Grease a pie-dish well, slice the bread, stone the raisins, and lay some of them in a ring at the bottom of the dish, with a few in the centre; spread the bread with the dripping (or sprinkle it with the fat), lay it in slices in the dish, with sugar and the rest of the raisins. Beat the egg to a froth, mix it with the milk, and pour it over the rest. Bake for an hour in a moderate oven. Turn it out while hot.

Crush six lumps of white sugar, and sift this over the pudding just before serving it.

This pudding is best eaten cold, when it resembles cheese cake. It may easily be made richer by substituting for part of the bread a few slices of dry cake, queen cakes, or sponge cakes. Jam also may be used (or marmalade) instead of raisins. The white sugar must not be added long before dinner, or it will melt, and the pretty effect be spoiled.

You will find half an ox-cheek, used in the way recommended here, one of the nicest and most economical of dishes. The meat is very tender and juicy, and besides the dishes given above, you can make about five quarts more of soup from the bones, which should provide you with stock for a week. It may be flavoured in various ways, and the last stock, which will be thin, should make pease-soup.

EXPENSES (FOR TWO DINNERS).

Half an ox-cheek, 1s. 3d.; vegetables for pie, soup, and pasties, 4d.; flour, 1¼ lb., 2½d.; flavouring, 2d.; clarified fat, 3d.; tapioca, 1½d.; milk, 7d.; sugar, 2d.; raisins, 2d.; egg, 1d; bread, 4d.; vegetables (or salad), 4d. Total, 4s. Average, 4d. per head for six persons.

I. L. RICHMOND.

DRESS AND DRESSMAKING.

WHEN "March winds and April showers" are gone, and "May flowers" are in all their beauty, it is high time to think of a new bonnet or hat for summer wear, and as long as women are young a hat is more economical than a bonnet, but it is sadly out of place to see elderly women, or mothers of grown-up sons and daughters, wearing hats, unless the hat be a large, plain, shady one, for comfortable country wear. It is a dreadful mistake to fancy that a youthful style of dress keeps a woman young looking, for it is just the reverse. The art of growing old gracefully consists mainly of wearing clothes suitable to one's age, and even a little in advance of it.

The hat and bonnet illustrated this month are not in the extreme of fashion, but are such as may be worn for a year and then freshened up without looking out of date or peculiar. The bonnet is a modified princess shape, in a good straw requiring very little trimming, and it suits almost every face. The brim may be left as it is or bound with velvet, and the strings are formed of two yards of ribbon folded in three

lengthways and secured by a firm stitch at the back and another at each corner. They can then be tied under the chin, or made into a nice bow lower down, which need not be untied every time it is worn. This way of wearing the strings in warm weather allows the collar and brooch to be seen at the throat, or the bow at the neck of the mantle, and is smarter and younger than tying them under the chin.

All flowers this year are very light and feathery. They are mounted with a sort of little posy of leaves and blossoms, and two or three slender sprays of something else rising from the middle. For instance, two or three roses may have sprays of mimosa, or London pride, or any such light little flower. This adds height to a bonnet which, when fashion changes, will look very nice with a much flatter trimming.

The edge of the brim of a hat is the place where the binding of silk or velvet first begins to look shabby, and if a few beads of the same colour are sewn round it, as in the hat trimmed with a mass of bows and ends, the evil day may be postponed. The way to put such beads on is to string them on a fine wire, and then put a neat *sewing* stitch between each bead all the way round.

A loop of ribbon wire, or of round, silk-covered wire in the middle of each loop of velvet or ribbon, keeps them from falling out of place or becoming flabby.

Velvet or satin for binding or covering the brims of bonnets and hats should always be cut on the cross, and can be bought cut in this manner. If you are so fortunate as to meet with a corner piece of velvet, it cuts up very economically. Professional milliners line such coverings with a piece of muslin cut also on the cross, but a very good plan for an amateur, and one that adds much to the apparent richness of the material, is to cover the brim first of all with a piece of fine or old flannel or cloth. This is particularly useful where the hat is of straw, as it prevents the rows from showing through. Thus treated a velvet at 4s. 6d. a yard looks as good as one at 8s. 6d. The way to keep velvet looking fresh and bright is to wipe it with a piece of soft flannel, which is even more effectual than what is called a velvet brush.

A very good rule to abide by with regard to flowers is to wear those that are in season, or, at all events, not conspicuously out of season. Violets, primroses, cowslips, and lilac are very suitable for spring, pansies and roses for summer, and berries for autumn and winter, and so forth. These little things evidence good taste, and are always attended to by first-rate milliners.

We also give an illustration of a mantle trimmed with lace. The sleeves are very much worn; indeed, it is difficult to find a mantle without them. They are supposed to keep the whole garment in shape, and prevent it from twisting round, a trick to which sleeveless mantles are much addicted, especially if the wearer is out shopping and accumulates parcels.

This pattern can be made up in silk, broché, or cashmere, and of the latter material takes about two yards, as it is of double width. There are now several manufacturing firms in the north of England which supply customers by means of an extensively developed pattern system, and from any

of them a beautifully fine cashmere can be obtained at 2s. 6d. per yard. Trimmed with lace and a small quantity of jet, it makes a very nice mantle. Silks were never so cheap as now, and of all silks a plain one soonest looks greasy, and a broché looks longest good. Most of us know of a shop where little things may be bought at moderate prices, such as flowers, ribbons, gloves, stockings, and laces. Shops of this kind frequently have great bargains to dispose of in the way of black lace by the dozen, and in putting on a couple of rows it is wise to have some black cut beads, each rather larger than a peppercorn, and sew them on singly about a quarter of an inch apart over the top row. It forms a nice finish, and is much less expensive than jet trimming. In making the double quilling of lace that goes round the throat the pleats must be very regular, and they always look better if the pattern part of the lace is held downwards.

Here is a wrinkle for those who have to be extremely economical and make a black mantle serve two purposes if possible. Make such a one as we have described in cashmere, and after wearing it during the late spring, summer, and early autumn, pick it carefully to pieces. Get four yards of inexpensive broché silk or satin, and two of black domette or lining flannel. Iron out your cashmere carefully, then cover each separate piece with the domette, and lastly with the satin or broché, and tack all three together at some distance from the edge. Close up all the seams in the broché, and smooth them open with the point of a hot iron. Then fold over your domette without any joining, lay one edge of the cashmere smooth, and fell the other over it. Tack the broché up about half an inch all the way round, and lightly fell the cashmere down to it. Put the lace and bead trimming on again, freshening the former, if necessary, by dipping it in a little beer and ironing on the wrong side, and you will have a new and warm winter mantle nicely lined, and quite thick enough for an ordinary English winter, especially if a woollen crossover or flannel bodice be worn under it on the coldest days.

The flat pattern of the mantle described and illustrated this month can be had by enclosing 6½d. in postage stamps to M. L., at the office of THE MOTHERS' COMPANION. *Please write the word "Pattern" in the top left-hand corner of the envelope.*